

## SHA to visit Dongguan

â€‹The Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Lau Kong-wah, will depart for Dongguan at noon tomorrow (August 20) to attend the kick-off ceremony of 2019 Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Youth Basketball Culture Festival. He will also visit an innovation and entrepreneurship base for Hong Kong and Macao youths in Dongguan Songshan Lake.

Mr Lau will return to Hong Kong in the evening on the same day.

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## Update on cases of Legionnaires' disease

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (August 19) reported the latest number of cases of Legionnaires' disease (LD), and stressed the importance of using and maintaining properly designed man-made water systems, adding that susceptible groups should strictly observe relevant precautions.

From August 11 to 17, one community-acquired LD case was reported. The male patient, aged 67 with underlying illnesses, lives in 128 Ma Tau Wai Road, To Kwa Wan.

"Epidemiological investigations are ongoing to identify potential sources of infection, high-risk exposure and clusters, if any," a spokesman for the CHP said.

As of August 17 this year, 70 LD cases have been reported. In 2018 and 2017, there were 105 and 72 cases respectively.

"Men, people aged over 50, smokers, alcoholics and persons with weakened immunity are more susceptible to LD. Some situations may also increase the risk of infection, including poor maintenance of water systems leading to stagnant water; living in areas with old water systems, cooling towers or fountains; using electric water heaters, whirlpools and spas or hot water spring spas; and recent stays in hotels or vessels," the spokesman said.

Legionellae are found in various environmental settings and grow well in warm water (20 to 45 degrees Celsius). They can be found in aqueous environments such as water tanks, hot and cold water systems, cooling towers, whirlpools and spas, water fountains and home apparatus which support breathing. People may become infected when they breathe in contaminated droplets (aerosols) and mist generated by artificial water systems, or when handling garden soil, compost and potting mixes.

Immunocompromised persons should:

- Use sterile or boiled water for drinking, tooth brushing and mouth rinsing;
- Avoid using humidifiers, or other mist- or aerosol-generating devices. A shower may also generate small aerosols; and
- If using humidifiers, or other mist- or aerosol-generating devices, fill the water tank with only sterile or cooled freshly boiled water, and not water directly from the tap. Also, clean and maintain humidifiers/devices regularly according to manufacturers' instructions. Never leave stagnant water in a humidifier/device. Empty the water tank, wipe all surfaces dry, and change the water daily.

The public should observe the health advice below:

- Observe personal hygiene;
- Do not smoke and avoid alcohol consumption;
- Strainers in water taps and shower heads should be inspected, cleaned, descaled and disinfected regularly or at a frequency recommended by the manufacturer;
- If a fresh water plumbing system is properly maintained, it is not necessary to install domestic water filters. Use of water filters is not encouraged as clogging occurs easily, which can promote growth of micro-organisms. In case water filters are used, the pore size should be 0.2 micrometres ( $\mu\text{m}$ ) and the filter needs to be changed periodically according to the manufacturer's recommendations;
- Drain and clean water tanks of buildings at least quarterly;
- Drain or purge for at least one minute infrequently used water outlets (e.g. water taps, shower heads and hot water outlets) and stagnant points of the pipework weekly or before use;
- Seek and follow doctors' professional advice regarding the use and maintenance of home respiratory devices and use only sterile water (not distilled or tap water) to clean and fill the reservoir. Clean and maintain the device regularly according to the manufacturer's instructions. After cleaning/disinfection, rinse the device with sterile water, cooled freshly boiled water or water filtered with 0.2  $\mu\text{m}$  filters. Never leave stagnant water in the device. Empty the water tank, keep all surfaces dry, and change the water daily; and
- When handling garden soil, compost and potting mixes:
  1. Wear gloves and a face mask;
  2. Water gardens and compost gently using low pressure;
  3. Open composted potting mixes slowly and make sure the opening is directed away from the face;
  4. Wet the soil to reduce dust when potting plants; and
  5. Avoid working in poorly ventilated places such as enclosed greenhouses.

The public may visit the CHP's [LD page](#), the [Code of Practice for Prevention of LD](#) and the [Housekeeping Guidelines for Cold and Hot Water](#)

[Systems for Building Management](#) of the Prevention of LD Committee, and the CHP's [risk-based strategy](#) for prevention and control of LD.

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## **Applications for Mainland University Study Subsidy Scheme close on September 2**

The Education Bureau (EDB) today (August 19) reminded students who are interested in applying for subsidy under the Mainland University Study Subsidy Scheme (MUSSS) for the 2019/20 academic year and who will enter designated Mainland institutions in the 2019/20 academic year for the first year of their studies to submit their completed application forms together with supporting documents to the EDB by post on or before September 2.

Eligible students may apply for the "means-tested subsidy" or "non-means-tested subsidy" under the MUSSS. The subsidy under MUSSS is granted on a yearly basis. The subsidised period would be the normal duration of the undergraduate programmes pursued by the student concerned in the designated Mainland institution. Eligible applicants can only receive either the "means-tested subsidy" or "non-means-tested subsidy" in an academic year.

For the 2019/20 academic year, the amount of full-rate subsidy and half-rate subsidy under the "means-tested subsidy" are HK\$16,800 and HK\$8,400 respectively. The amount of the "non-means-tested subsidy" is HK\$5,600. There are 181 designated Mainland institutions, including 112 institutions participating in the 2019/20 Scheme for Admission of Hong Kong students to Mainland Higher Education Institutions. The MUSSS is not subject to any quota.

Detailed information on the MUSSS, including the 181 designated Mainland institutions, application forms and guidance notes, are available at the EDB website ([www.edb.gov.hk/musss19](http://www.edb.gov.hk/musss19)). The EDB will inform individual applicants of the application result by the first quarter of 2020.

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## **Police's response to public meeting on Hong Kong Island**

Police had earlier issued a Letter of No Objection regarding a public

meeting held yesterday (August 18) on Hong Kong Island. Although the meeting was generally peaceful, acts of breaching public peace happened afterwards. Police deeply regret such acts.

A large number of protestors rushed to the roads and occupied the carriageways of Causeway Road and Hennessy Road after leaving the public meeting venue. The protestors later proceeded to Western District, Central, Admiralty, Wan Chai, Causeway Bay and Tin Hau, occupying the carriageways and paralysed the traffic in the vicinity. In the evening, a large group of protestors still stayed on the carriageways around Admiralty. Some protestors also shot hard objects at the Central Government Complex with slingshots and aimed laser beams at police officers.

One of the accusations by the public meeting organizer was the abusive use of violence by Police. Police have to point out that over the past two months, violent incidents happened in various large-scale protests. The Police Force has always been exercising restraint, tolerance and patience, striving to maintain public order and protect the safety of members of the public. Only when there were violent acts or illegal behaviours which endangered the safety of people at scene, Police would stop them by proportionate use of force to prevent the incidents from heating up and worsening. Protestors neglected their violent acts and the provocation at Police but criticized Police's use of force was reversing the causality and was unfair to Police.

Police all along respect people's rights and freedom to express views and facilitate all peaceful public events. Police appeal to protestors to remain peaceful, rational and non-violent when participating in public events in order to maintain public safety and public order.

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## Government response to public meeting in Victoria Park

In response to the public meeting held in Victoria Park today (August 18), a Government spokesman said that though the public meeting was generally peaceful, the participants occupied a number of thoroughfares on Hong Kong Island, seriously affecting traffic and causing much inconvenience to the community. The Transport Department and the Police have actively co-ordinated with concerned parties to minimise the impact.

The spokesman reiterated that it was most important to restore social order as soon as possible. The Government will begin sincere dialogue with the public, mend social rifts and rebuild social harmony when everything has

calmed down.